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ABSTRACT

Developing countries in Asia and the Pacific are undergoing a critical period in rural development. As part of a plan for integrated rural development, education has shifted its priorities to equalizing access to educational opportunities and improving quality of instruction. Representatives from Bangladesh, China, India, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Thailand held a Study Group Meeting aimed at identifying causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas and related issues. The group attributed the educational underdevelopment of the rural areas to the following major causes: (1) poverty combined with cultural, social, religious, and political factors affecting education in different geographical conditions; (2) transportation and communication factors; (3) population explosion; (4) language difficulties; (5) inadequate emphasis on rural development in educational policy, planning, and management; (6) inadequate provision of educational services due to disparities in educational opportunities and inefficient or inadequate physical facilities and materials; (7) irrelevance of the curriculum to the rural environment and needs; (8) low quality of teaching due to low professional competence, experience, incentives, and motivation, lack of teacher support services, lack of materials; and (9) lack of parental or community support. The report describes the participating countries' experiences in rural educational development, and also includes a review of the participating countries' innovative approaches to providing education in rural areas, an analysis of selected innovative approaches, a proposed regional plan of action, and recommendations for the improvement of education in rural areas. Appendices include the agenda of the meeting and a list of participants. (ALL)

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Asia and the Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development

Relevance of Education to Rural Development

Report of a Regional Study Group Meeting

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APEID

Asia and the Pacific Programme
of Educational Innovation
for Development

Relevance of Education to Rural Development

Regional Study Group Meeting on Identification of Causes of Educational Underdevelopment in Rural Areas and on Relevance of Education to the Rural Environment

Bangkok, 22 October – 8 November 1985

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PREFACE

The APEID Study Group Meeting on Education and Rural Development was held at the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific (ROEAP), Bangkok in two phases. It addressed itself to the following objectives:

Phase one

1. To review the participating countries' experiences, identifying major critical issues and growth points in (i) identifying the causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas, focusing on causes for pupil wastage, dropping out, class repetition and other causes specific to rural areas; (ii) extension of education in rural areas; and (iii) relating education to rural population.

2. To prepare a working paper for the Second Phase of the Regional Study Group Meeting covering (i) extension of education to rural areas; and (ii) relevance of education to rural development, identifying various issues and problems of educational underdevelopment in rural areas.

3. To develop proposals for a regional plan of action for networking of experimental projects focused on linking education to the emerging needs of the population in rural areas.

Phase two

1. To review and evaluate country experiences in view of the major critical issues in extension of education in rural areas and its relevance to rural population.

2. To analyse innovative approaches in education in rural areas, focusing on its expansion and increased relevance of the content of various subjects in general education, as well as science and technology with a view to revise the curricula keeping in view the needs of rural communities.

3. To develop a framework for undertaking experimental projects focused on problems of education in rural areas and adopt a regional plan of action for networking of experimental projects focused on linking education to the emerging needs of the rural population.

4. To develop recommendations on national strategies for extension of education in rural areas; and for establishment of specialized

educational institutions in rural areas, viz., teacher-training institutes, technical colleges and agricultural colleges.

Prior to the Meeting a series of studies reflecting different facets of the concept of education for rural development had been undertaken as well as a synthesis of country experiences in this field. In 1982 UNESCO, ROEAP published a portfolio of studies undertaken within the scope of APEID. The portfolio comprises five volumes, dealing with various aspects of the economic and social life of the rural poor, and focusing on some basic needs and human services that are critically important, namely: food, nutrition, health and education.

In 1984, Dr. T.N. Dhar examined the above studies as well as other reports and publications from various countries in the region focusing on problems of rural development and on various innovative projects and practices. This work served as a background working paper for the first phase of the Study Group Meeting on Education and Rural Development held in Bangkok from 22 October to 8 November 1985.

During 1984-1985, in preparation for the Study Group Meeting, the following countries participating in APEID undertook preparation of evaluative studies on various experiments and innovative projects on education and rural development with focus on primary education: Bangladesh, China, India, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan and Thailand. Participants from these countries were invited to attend the present Meeting and to present their country experiences.

The evaluative studies of India, Nepal and Thailand were completed prior to the Meeting and presented to all participants, along with a synopsis of the Malaysian study.

Procedures

Phase One which was attended by one participant each from India, Nepal and the Philippines and two participants from Thailand, took place from 22 to 29 October 1985 and addressed itself to identifying causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas and related issues and problems.

The participants attending the First Phase of the Study Group Meeting analysed the variety of causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas presented in all case studies, evaluative studies and other documents, and prepared a working paper suggesting the development of a Regional Plan of Action for networking of experimental projects focused on linking education to the needs of rural population which was presented to the participants, attending the Second Phase of the Study Group Meeting.

Phase Two was attended by the participants from Phase one, who were joined by one participant each from Bangladesh, China, Malaysia and Pakistan. (See the list of participants, observers and officers of the workshop provided in Annex II.) The second phase of the Meeting took place from 31 October to 8 November 1985, addressing itself to the analysis of relevance of education to rural

environment. The second phase of the Meeting was opened by Mr. J. Beynon, Director a.i. of the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok.

The second phase participants reviewed the participating countries' experiences, by analysing their innovative approaches to provide education in rural areas, taking into account both expansion of educational opportunities and increasing the relevance of general education subjects to rural life. The participants, in their personal capacities, also discussed a regional plan of action which includes a framework for undertaking innovative projects and a system of networking for exchange data, information and experiences which can only enhance the development of rural areas. (See Annex I of the Report for the Agenda).

At its concluding session on 8 November 1985, the Meeting adopted the draft report with modifications to be incorporated in the final report.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The developing countries in Asia and the Pacific are passing through a critical period in rural development. Most countries are faced with the problems of growing population, recurrent food shortages, illiteracy, malnutrition, environmental pollution, and economic and social disparities. There is a widening gap between those living in the urban and rural areas. The majority of the poor live in rural areas, where they are often neglected and deprived of the social services to which they are entitled within their own societies. Thus the majority of them are malnourished and in poor health, illiterate, or with a low level of education. The problems are even worse for women.

This critical situation stems from a variety of factors: psychological, social, economic, cultural, educational and geographical; so complex and pervasive that education must be viewed in an interdisciplinary context.

The plight of the rural poor has been recognized with due concern by all governments and several national and international agencies. Attempts have been made to alleviate their conditions under various kinds of projects. In some countries, priority has been placed on agrarian reform directed towards the improvisation of simple low-cost technology to increase production and to improve the processing of food. Attempts have also been made to extend such services of governments as health and nutrition, education, and agriculture. But in most cases these services do not reach the low income and deprived groups.

Education and integrated rural development. The concern with rural development, and a conscious and planned effort to implement specific programmes which will promote it, leaves some doubt about the conventional economic policy (GNP) followed in developing countries. Instead, attempts are now being made at "integrated rural development". The basic characteristics of integrated rural development include:

i) a comprehensive change encompassing social, economic, and cultural spheres involving all segments of the community;

ii) encouraging change in all sectors and regions of the society at an even pace;

iii) meaningful linkages among diverse agencies, sectors and regions, requiring co-ordinated and concerted efforts at development; and

iv) active voluntary participation by the members of the community and the larger society.

Relevance of education to rural development

As a component of an integrated rural development plan, education has shifted its priorities to equalizing access to educational opportunities and improving quality of instruction. This change is prompted not only by humanitarian concerns, but also by important political and economic considerations. Dissatisfaction with the inability of the existing education system to cope with the problem of disparities has propelled the search for alternatives to formal education.

Education linked with programmes of rural development is provided mainly through informal and non-formal modes. It calls for activities where educators, community leaders and other groups collagorate effectively with other agencies within a broadly conceived and defined multi-dimensional programme of rural transformation. The nature of the educational programme is dictated by the "total rural development" programme, its multi-agency character and multi-pronged approach to problems. As seen in the countries in Asia, a non-formal educational programme includes a variety of aspects of education such as health and nutrition, agriculture, basic education and skills development. In some countries, science and technology education in the form of extension services or out-of-school education activities are provided as instruments for sustained improvement of technology. Special programmes for women and deprived groups have also been launched to remove disparities between men and women, as well as between the privileged and underprivileged sectors of the society.

Educational underdevelopment in rural areas. As the countries in Asia and the Pacific focus their attention on educational development in the rural areas, it becomes imperative for them to make an incisive investigation into certain manifestations of educational underdevelopment. The Study Group Meeting* for this purpose held at UNESCO, Bangkok attempted to conceptualize the operational definition of "educational underdevelopment" through quantitative and qualitative measures. The participants for the first phase identified such indicators as low literacy rate, low participation rate, high repetition and drop-out rates, and low achievement level which combined to reflect educational underdevelopment. Waste is the result not only of dropping out but also of high repetition and low transition as well as low achievement rate. Qualitative indicators in terms of low achievement level of students is manifested in areas where educational inputs like qualifications of teachers, material facilities and community participation are not satisfactorily met. Such conditions are more prevalent in rural areas.

Causes of educational underdevelopment in the rural areas. The first phase of the Meeting addressed itself to identification of causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas. The participants of this phase critically examined various studies, reports and documents pertaining to educational development in the rural areas in the region. Keeping in mind the dynamics of educational development, the group identified a list of major causes of educational underdevelopment in the rural areas, as follows:

1. Poverty (low income, malnutrition, poor health) combined with cultural, social, religious and political factors affecting education in

* Regional Study Group Meeting on Identification of Causes of Educational Underdevelopment in Rural Areas and Relevance to Education on Rural Environment, 22 October-8 November 1985, Bangkok, Thailand.

different geographical conditions (climate, terrain, fertility of land);

2. Transportation and communication factors (roads, public transport, electricity, postal services);

3. Population explosion (high birth rates);

4. Language difficulties (multilingualism within a country, media of instruction different from the mother tongue, limited vocabulary of some languages and dialects);

5. Inadequate emphasis on rural development in educational policy, planning and management;

6. Inadequate provision of educational services due to

   a) disparities in educational opportunities, and

   b) inefficient/inadequate physical facilities and materials;

7. Irrelevance of the curriculum to the rural environment and needs;

8. Low quality of teaching because of

   a) low professional competence, experience, incentives, and motivation of teachers, and

   b) underqualified and/or unmotivated teachers; lack of teacher support services, and materials; and

9. Lack of parental or community support.

Chapter Two

COUNTRY EXPERIENCES IN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS

In most of the participating countries education for rural development was introduced during the last ten years. It is presently implemented in an integrated rural development process in which educators, community leaders, and other groups or agencies collaborate for of a broadly conceived multi-dimensional programme of rural transformation.

The following pages of the report present the countries experiences in educational development in rural areas, describing briefly the country profiles, and educational system of each country, focusing on problems and issues relating to educational underdevelopment in rural areas, and innovative approaches/ practices/programmes and projects undertaken to solve these problems.

An analysis of these innovative approaches/programmes providing education in rural areas is presented in Chapter Four.

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh covers an area of 140,000 sq km with an estimated population of about 100 million. Its population is increasing at a rate of 2.5 per cent per year.

Ninety per cent of the people are below the poverty-line and mainly dependent on agriculture. The per capita income is about US$ 90. Sixty per cent of the rural population suffer from some form of malnutrition. Eighty per cent of the population are illiterate.

Educational system. The educational structure in Bangladesh consists of three levels: primary, secondary and higher. Besides these broad levels, provisions exist for technical, vocational, commercial and professional education.

The first level of education has five grades, normally comprising ages 6 to 10.

Primary education is not yet compulsory. However, the proposal for the programme of universal primary education (UPE) has been taken up and efforts will be made to make it compulsory gradually. Out of 40,000 primary schools, 36,685 schools have been nationalized since 1973.

Secondary education is divided into three stages: a three-year junior secondary (Class VI to Class VIII), a two-year secondary (Classes IX and X) and a two-year higher secondary course (Classes XI and XII).

Parallel to the secondary level of the national education system there is Muslim religious education known as Madrasha education catering to elementary and advanced education.

Of the 8,327 secondary schools in the country, only 132 are government-managed, the rest being private. The Government intends to gradually take over the secondary schools in the course of the coming years.

After the higher secondary certificate examination, students may pursue higher education. Grades XI and XII are treated as higher education, which is thus provided in intermediate colleges and degree colleges and in the country's six universities.

During the Second Plan (1980-1985), the education sector has been allocated Tk. 4,700 million, out of which a sum of Tk. 4,700 million which is more than five times of the allocation for the first two plans. A separate Directorate of Education was also created for primary education. The main thrust during the Second Plan period is to:

a) Improve physical facilities;

b) Supply textbooks, free of cost to all children;

c) Supply school uniforms free of cost to one-third of the students;

d) Supply teaching aids;

e) Train teachers;

f) Effectively supervise schools;

g) Decentralize administration;

h) Try-out innovative programmes to increase enrolment and retention rates;

i) Review curricula and textbooks on a continuing basis;

j) Promote active community involvement;

k) Begin inter-Upa-Zila transfers of teachers.

Causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas. It is estimated that nearly 70 per cent of the primary age-group population are enrolled in schools. Of those enrolled in Class I, 60 per cent drop out before reaching Class II, while only 11.83 per cent reach Class V. Further, only 40 per cent of those completing primary education reach the secondary stage. Therefore there is a serious twin problem of low enrolment and high drop-out rate.

Educational underdevelopment. The main reasons for this phenomenon are thought to be: (a) poverty; (b) illiteracy among the majority of the population; (c) lack of opportunity for preparatory learning; (d) poor physical facilities in the schools; (e) poor quality of teachers; (f) uninteresting teaching; (g) unrelated curriculum; (h) the absence of community support; and (i) sparsely populated hilly region with forests and difficult communication, particularly in the eastern districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts and Bandarban.

Innovative educational development programme/project relevant to rural environment. Many innovative approaches are being initiated in the country by both government and other agencies to link education with the rural environment.

A few of them may be noted below:

a) *Decentralization of administration of primary schools.* The Government has decentralized the management and administration of primary education from national level to Upa-Zilla level (sub-district). Under the new system each Upa-Zilla parishad will plan and execute the programme of development of primary education within the framework of national policy. Parent-teacher Association is also formed in every school to forge greater co-operation and understanding between the community and school.

b) *The community learning centre project.* To enlist active community participation and make parents aware of the value of education both for their children and the community as a whole, an experimental project known as Community Learning Centre (CLC) has been initiated with assistance from UNICEF, in 100 selected primary schools, which converted the school into centres for all nation building activities.

c) *Community school project.* This project is being implemented by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education in two secondary schools, one for boys and one for girls in each of 200 selected Upa-Zilla Headquarters. School drop-outs are being trained in various vocational trade courses.

d) *IMPACT experiment.* An innovative programme named Instructional Management by Parents, Community and Teacher based on the models evolved in the Philippines and Indonesia has been developed and is being carried out on an experimental basis in some selected primary schools. Peer group teaching, where children of higher classes are used for teaching lower class through modules based on existing curricula and textbooks, is being used.

e) *Sabar Gonopathsala Project* is being conducted by Gono-Shastha Kendra for children of disadvantaged parents who cannot afford the expenses of primary education.

f) *Meher-Panchagram UPE Project.* The project is being administered by the Association for Community Education to provide UPE to the children through community based schools.

g) *Rural Technical School at Surrej, Tangail.* The project is being implemented by the centre for mass education in science.

Future trends. The Community Learning Centre Project and Community School Project are being tested at present in selected schools. They may be extended gradually.

Agriculture-oriented technical schools should be started, to get more community participation in educational programmes.

The mosque-based Maktal can be more fruitfully utilized for non-formal education.

There is a need for change in the school curriculum to integrate science and technology in the curricula and syllabuses in order to keep pace with the modern world.

CHINA

China covers an area of 9,596,961 sq km with an estimated population of 1,039.8 million.

Educational system. Under the guidance of the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Government, education has made great progress. An educational system fitting the needs of socialist construction is gradually taking shape.

Some major reforms in education are presently taking place, following the National Conference on Education held in May 1985. The decision on the reform of the educational system sets forth a series of major policy-decisions on the reform of the educational system. The decision stipulates that the responsibility for developing basic education should be assigned to local authorities, that a nine-year compulsory educational system should be readjusted, and that strenuous efforts should be made to develop vocational and technical education.

Educational underdevelopment in rural areas

Indicators

a) the peasants' educational level is still fairly low;

b) after implementation of the rural production responsibility system some new problems emerged, resulting from the decreasing percentage of school-age children's attendance and the rising percentage of student drop-outs;

c) in some areas school buildings are dilapidated, desks are insufficient and teaching aids are inadequate, thus seriously affecting the improvement of teaching quality; and

d) there is a shortage of qualified manpower on every front and an abnormal age structure of professional personnel.

This situation is incompatible with the drive for agricultural modernization.

Major causes

a) The influence of long-term negligence of education has hampered the development of rural education. In some rural areas, a negative attitude towards education still exists. Some leaders do not fully understand the extreme importance of education and the urgency of developing and reforming education.

b) There is only a small amount of educational investment, funds are lacking and therefore the material foundation for developing rural education is weak.

c) The internal structure of rural education is irrational, affecting the economic and social efficiency of education.

d) The weak professional competence of rural school teachers affects the standards and quality of rural education. The most serious problem confronting the teachers' ranks is that their professional level is low, teachers are aging and there is a temporary shortage. The low professional level of rural teachers constitutes an unfavourable condition for the development of education.

Innovative programmes. Rural education is an important component of China's entire educational undertaking. The Party and Government have repeatedly stressed the importance of rural education and have adopted various measures to promote the reform and development of rural environment.

Reforming the educational management system. While China is currently reforming its economic structure, it is also proceeding with the reform of its educational system. The Party Central Committee's Decision on the Reform of the Educational System stipulates that the local authorities are responsible for the development of elementary education. Except that general principles and policies and overall planning are to be decided by the central authorities, the formulation and implementation of specific policies, regulations and plans as well as the administration, management and supervision of schools are placed under the charge of the provincial, city (prefecture), country and township authorities.

Systematically instituting a nine-year compulsory educational system. Since the rural economic and cultural development is very uneven, the requirements and contents of the popularization of education vary according to the local conditions.

In the process of popularizing elementary education, China has adopted the policy of self-reliance, by co-ordinating the efforts of the state and the people, and fully activates the enthusiasm of the state authorities, the collectives and the masses.

Reforming the rural secondary educational set up and energetically developing vocational and technical education. In the past few years, people in various rural areas have taken actions to convert some regular middle schools into agricultural middle schools or other vocational schools. In regular middle schools vocational and technical courses are offered and vocational and technical classes are opened, effectively increasing the proportion of vocational and technical education.

Special courses in vocational and technical schools are offered mainly in accordance with the local agricultural economic structure and the needs for developing a diversified economy. It is done in close connection with the actual local production and the people's livelihood, so as to serve the purpose of bringing out economic prosperity and invigorating agriculture.

Reforming and strengthening peasant education and raising the peasants' scientific and general knowledge level. Peasant education is been conducted through many channels. Social forces are mobilized to create more avenues for running schools. For example, schools are run by counties, townships and villages; by the Communist Youth League, women's federations, the militia, science associations and other organizations. Regular schools run evening classes, retired cadres and teachers and skilled workers also lend a hand in operating schools.

As their specific conditions vary, the focal points of peasant education are different in various rural areas. In areas where illiteracy has not been wiped out, the local authorities concentrate their efforts on eliminating illiteracy; in areas where illiteracy has been wiped out, efforts are devoted to developing vocational and technical education and raising the peasants' general knowledge; in economically and culturally developed areas, emphasis is put on developing elementary and secondary vocational and technical education in the fields of agriculture, forestry, livestock breeding, industry and commerce and active efforts are being made to create conditions for the trial operation of institutions of higher learning for peasants.

Future trends. With the development of the rural economy, rural education is developing with unprecedented momentum. But because the economic foundation and cultural level of various regions are different, the development of rural education is uneven, and so there are still many problems awaiting to be solved. Under the leadership of the Party Central Committee and the People's government and with the joint efforts of the cadres and masses, China will succeed in reforming its rural education. It will establish a rural education system suited to specific conditions and constantly provide the countryside with scientific and technical personnel and trained labour forces.

INDIA

India, covering an area of 3,287,782 sq km, is a home of many races, religions and a multiplicity of languages and dialects. Its population is around 730 million. Over 76 per cent of the population lives in rural areas, out of which 70 per cent are sustained by agriculture. There are 15 specified and recognized languages which make part of the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Hindi and English are official languages of the country.

Structure of education. India is a union of 22 states and nine union territories. States have full autonomy in matters of education. Therefore, there are variants in education in different states. On the whole, the broad pattern is about five years of primary education (age group 6-11); three years of middle school education (age group 14-16); and two years of higher secondary of senior secondary education or vocational education (age group 16-18). This is followed by a three-year first degree course. The vocational education at the senior secondary stage do not entitle the students to enter degree courses in professional education directly. The masters degree is of two-years duration after the first degree.

At the Centre, there is a Ministry of Education which has been recently renamed the Ministry of Human Resource Development. This is advised by

the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) which is the highest advisory body. State Education Ministers' Conferences and the Planning Commission at the national level also help in formulating and implementing the policies and allocation of resources. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) are the two important institutions to provide academic support to the Ministry of Human Resource Development through their research, innovations and developmental programmes. The smallest administrative unit in a state is either the sub-district or the Community Development Block and is under the charge of Deputy Education Officer or Block Development Officer whose role is very crucial for the educational development in rural areas.

Educational underdevelopment in rural areas. In 1981-1982, there were 495,007 primary and 119,560 middle schools in the country. These were catering to 92.82 per cent and 78.83 per cent of the rural population respectively. There were about 150,253 settlements with populations of less than 300 having no primary school within one kilometre. There were 139,654 habitations not having middle schools within 5 kilometres. Thus some of the underdevelopment was in the nature of lack of the necessary facilities.

The all-India overall participation rate in 1978 was 79.22 per cent compared to the total population of children in the age-group 6-11. In rural areas this enrolment was far below the national average in the case of some of the states like Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan where it was 56.99 per cent and 59.74 per cent respectively, and in the rural areas of some of the states, this ratio was far less. It was 19.68 per cent in Andhra Pradesh, 18.54 per cent in Bihar, 22.13 per cent in Madhya Pradesh, 25.41 per cent in Orissa, 23.61 per cent in Rajasthan, 23.32 per cent in Uttar Pradesh, and 27.59 per cent in West Bengal. There were great disparities too of enrolment in the various districts of a state and in some cases it was very low. Further, the girls enrolment in comparison to boys was also low.

The wastage in the form of drop-outs and repeaters on the basis of a sample survey conducted in 1977 was found to be 50.6 per cent up to grade III and 52.0 per cent up to grade IV. This wastage is much more in rural areas than urban areas and also more among girls than boys.

No specific study has been made about the achievement level of children in rural areas. However, the results of various civil-service examinations show a low achievement level.

The major causes of underdevelopment of education in rural areas are as follows:

Insufficient provision of schooling facilities, particularly in rural areas; poor infrastructural facilities; socio-economic background of the children; poor enrolment, particularly of girls; irrelevance of education to the needs and life situations of the children; poor initiation of children in education; lack of resources; urban bias in education; elitist approach towards education, and limited community participation.

Innovative approaches in education in rural areas

Ashram schools. In these schools, there is an attempt to provide culturally relevant education in the setting of children's own environment. The curriculum has a slightly different orientation in the sense that much emphasis is laid on cultural activities, arts and crafts, and the needs of the people. Students have to manage their own affairs leading to the inculcation of a sense of self-reliance. Specially qualified and trained teachers are appointed who live with students and help them in their home assignments. These schools have their unique features in the form of their environment, the approach to teaching, and attitude of service among teachers.

Inter-village schools. Tribal areas have a large number of small habitations with a population of less than 200 people. Arunachal Pradesh Government has tried to open inter-village schools. In this experiment, smaller hamlets with sparse populations are identified and a central village, almost equi-distant from all the feeder villages, is selected. The inter-village school with a hostel is opened in the central village and children from all the feeder villages are admitted there and housed in the hostel. In these schools, attendance is much higher, wastage and drop-out much less and teaching regular.

The Bidisa experiment on education of the under-privileged. This innovative project is implemented for the Lodha community, at Bidisa in West Bengal, the objective being to 'educate the tribes and acculturate and socialise them with a view to bringing them into the mainstream of society'.

The project started with a survey of the community on the basis of which an educational action programme was drawn up. Primary and Secondary schools were opened with residential facilities. The curriculum is supplemented with interesting and relevant activities enabling children to acquire skills to earn their livelihood in later life. It is a very comprehensive project, involving students, parents, teachers, social workers and anthropologists. The main advantage of this project is that a much larger number of Lodha children are attending school today than they did in the past. They have acquired skills to make them self-sufficient.

Vikaswadi project. This is implemented at Kosbad in Maharashtra, located in a tribal area. It has three main components – Creche, Balwadi, and primary school; productive work centre for the children and the middle school. The main objective is to decrease the drop-out rate through non-formal education.

Selected experimental projects dealing with problems of education in rural areas

Some of the innovative experimental projects to improve the quality of education and reduce drop-out and wastage are described below:

Primary Education Curriculum Renewal. Launched in 1976, the major objectives are to:

i) develop new curricula and learning materials relevant to the basic needs and life situations of the children; and

ii) increase the meaningfulness of the existing primary education through gradual infusion into the primary school curriculum of new ideas tested in the experimental education programme.

It aims to create the necessary competencies among educational planners and workers at different levels, for developing and implementing the curricula.

Nutrition/Health Education and Environmental Sanitation at the primary stage. The main objective of this project is to help the primary school teachers to understand and practise the technique of integrating the nutrition/health concepts into their teaching of the component subjects of the primary school curriculum.

Under the project, five regional centres were established in five states and a package for primary school pupils and teachers was developed. About 7,500 teachers from 2,650 primary schools were trained under the project. A supplementary programme to reach the community through teachers, children and parents was also developed to make the programme more effective and viable.

The evaluation of the project has indicated that it has had an impact on the health and nutritional status of the children studying in the schools in which the scheme was implemented.

This project was launched to meet the shortage of teachers.

Experimental Project on the Upgraded School System. Various grades are fused into one class and the child is allowed to progress according to his/her own ability and speed. The success of this project lies in the self-learning materials and the outlook of the teachers. The main feature of the school is that there are no formal examinations or retention. The experiment, though limited, has shown encouraging signs.

Comprehensive Access to Primary Education. This major experiment tries to develop a non-formal system of education as an alternative to formal schooling by evolving a work-based decentralized curricula and learning materials relevant to the needs and life situations of diverse groups of children.

The main thrust of this project is to introduce a training-cum-production mode for gaining experience of developing curricula and learning materials in the curriculum of elementary teachers' training programme both for pre-service and in-service.

Here the teacher becomes the focal-point for generating the total package from curriculum to learning materials for the diverse groups of children as per their needs and life situations. The training of the teachers is thus very important both in methodology and content with regard to this aspect.

Non-formal Education (NFE) Project. This has been thought of as an important device to promote universalization of education at the primary stage. It was initiated in 1977-1978 as a pilot project by the NCERT.

The main objective of the project is to provide educational opportunity to school drop-outs or non-enrolled children.

The NCERT pilot project on NFE attempted to integrate rural development through the support of two school teachers and one community person on part time basis. The teaching-learning materials were developed keeping in view the development needs of the community and local resources available. It had the support from other development agencies at the local level.

The activities, apart from classes in literacy and numeracy, there were field demonstration of agricultural crops and making and using compost pits; and pictorial materials on health and hygiene. Work on ceramics, tie and dye, and papier mache were also introduced. The Mahila Mardal (Women Club) and Youth Forum were organized.

The NFE generated great interest among the local people. But it needs greater co-ordination and regular support to innovative activities and programmes.

There are other efforts being made by various development agencies which have not been listed. The projects discussed did not make an exhaustive list of projects/programmes for educational development in rural areas.

MALAYSIA

Malaysia is a multi-racial country with the Malay and Chinese forming the main racial groups. It consists of 13 states; 11 situated in peninsular West Malaysia and the other two on the island of Borneo forming East Malaysia. The most developed part of Malaysia is the West coast of peninsular Malaysia, whereas the other parts are largely rural and relatively underdeveloped.

Malaysia's natural resources are mainly agro-based, the mainstays of which are now palm oil and rubber. Other natural resources include tin, petroleum, and copper. Industrialization is now being expanded, particularly in relation to heavy industries. In spite of the difficulties in maintaining the prices of local commodities in the international market, the Malaysian economy is progressing at a relatively healthy rate.

In the last decade, Malaysia introduced the New Economic Policy (NEP) which seeks to eradicate poverty among all Malaysians, irrespective of racial origins, and to restructure Malaysian society so that the identification of race with economic function and geographical location is reduced, and eventually eliminated. A special cabinet committee recommended a total of 173 proposals aiming at rendering education more relevant, suitable and effective to meet social and national aspirations. These proposals, in the areas of curriculum, schooling system, teacher education, supporting services, evaluation, facilities, and technical as well as vocational education, together with the New Economic Policy, form the main thrust of educational development in the 1980s.

The important aims underlying the national education policy are:

a) a united nation of a plural society;

b) a democratic society through a constitutionally elected parliament;

c) a just society of equal opportunities for all;

d) a liberal society of diverse cultural traditions; and

e) a progressive society oriented towards science and modern technology.

Educational system. Basic education of nine years is free and universal, but not compulsory in Malaysia. Primary education of six years duration is extended to all pupils in government and fully aided schools in three media, namely; Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese and Tamil. Promotion through all grades and into the secondary level is automatic. However, the national system offers only secondary schools in the Bahasa Malaysia medium. Children from other media of primary schools have moved into the national system via a one year transistion class. The nine years of basic education is comprehensive in structure and does not provide for any specialization. Subsequent grades are more specialized and entry is selective. Essentially these higher grades are academic in nature and are geared towards preparation for higher education. The educational system also offers fully residential science schools in the rural areas. There are a small number of private schools, catering for both locals and foreigners. However, except those catering for non-Malaysians all schools follow a common curriculum, albeit in the different language media (for the primary schools). Technical and vocational education is also provided for the lower and upper secondary levels of education. Non-formal education in relation to rural development is also provided through ministries other than the education ministry.

Educational underdevelopment in rural areas. The provision of sufficient school places for both the first and second levels of education in the rural areas in Malaysia was given top priority in all the 5 year development plans since the early 1970s. This development, mainly financed through World Bank loans saw the extensive building and upgrading of first level schools and also lower secondary schools. This development also included the building of large size residential schools and junior college complexes. In the recent budget for 1985-1986, this programme of educational development is being further pursued. The development budget sets aside more funds to add more than 20,000 places at the first level for the rural areas.

It would seem that in terms of quantitative development, such as provision of school places and related infrastructure, the rural areas are no longer a problem. However, qualitative development remains the pressing and yet unresolved need.

Indicators of underdevelopment in Malaysian rural areas. Given the sufficiency of school places and the high social demand, the main quantitative indicators of educational underdevelopment, such as *participation rates, drop out rates,* and *repetition rates* are no longer applicable in the Malaysian context. Latest statistics (1982-1983) show a participation rate in the rural areas about 98 per cent and a drop-out rate at the first/second level transition stage of about 2.2 per cent; a decrease from about 9 per cent in the early 1970s. The drop-out over the entire period of 6 years first level education stands less than 3 per cent. As the promotion is automatic in the first nine years of education, children are not retained through

poor grades at any level of education. Hence repetition rates are inapplicable as an indicator of educational development for Malaysia.

The main indicator of educational underdevelopment or wastage which can be used is related to the qualitative aspect, that is *underachievement.*

The level of achievement of rural children, in spite of the extensive provision of school places and facilities and the increase in trained teachers, remains significantly lower than the urban schools. The picture has not changed since the earlier part of the 1970s when Murad (1973) and Seymour (1974) both pointed out the serious problems in the provision of education in the rural areas in terms of children's 'learning efficiency'. In more recent times, the Cabinet Committee Report on Education (1979) made this one of its main concerns and recommended radical changes in the primary school curriculum, such as the reduction of subject matter in the curriculum and the emphasis of the teaching of basic skills. While there have been considerable gains in the achievement of rural children in recent years, the gap between urban and rural still remains significant.

Major causes for rural underdevelopment. The causes for the mainly qualitative undevelopment in the rual areas are numerous and are complex and interrelated. The major causes identified are, in order of priority:

i) Teachers. While the lack of competence due to poor training or no training at all may be a source of the problem, negative attitudes, lack of motivation and dedication are more serious and difficult problems to resolve. Teachers' morale and conflicting value systems towards the rural community may also contribute to the problem.

ii) Poor support services in supervision and inadequate inputs of expert professional advice and guidance. The teachers in rural areas do not have access to supervisors and teachers centres. Professional development is not easily encouraged in the rual areas.

iii) Lack of supportive material in the rural school environment and in the home environment. Newspapers are non existent. Books and magazines are not easily available. Children have hardly anything else to stimulate their interest except textbooks.

iv) Uneconomically sized schools and high incidence of multiple class teaching. In the effort to make education more accessible to all children in the sparsely populated rural areas, multiple class teaching had to be introduced in some small schools.

v) Poor equipment and teaching aids.

Selected innovative projects in education relating to rural development. Over the years, since the Drop-out Report, there have been several Research and Development Projects to correct this imbalance. Such projects include the Compensatory Education Project undertaken by the Curriculum Development Centre, Preschool Project undertaken by KEMAS* and Project NTR undertaken by Specialist

* Kemajuan Masyarakat = Social Development.

Teacher Training Institute. Some of these projects have lapsed and were incorporated in KBSR (new primary school curriculum); while others are still going on.

Project InSPIRE

a) *The nature of the project.* "InSPIRE" stands for Integrated System of Programmed Instruction for Rural Environment". Its sponsors are the Ministry of Education, Malaysia; International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada; Yayasan Sabah and Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang. It was set up in November 1977.

b) *Project objectives.* The project objectives are to: study the problems of educational innovation in Malaysia; diagnose in a systematic manner the problems of learning and teaching in the rural primary school; search for, design and test alternative approaches to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and develop and strengthen a local corps of experts in educational research.

c) *Implementation of the project.* The areas it serves are the rural areas of Penang, Province Wellesley, Perak, Kadah and Sabah. Its functions include the development of instructional materials for both teacher and pupils and research involving the study of pupils, teachers and school characteristics.

Multiple class teaching project

a) *Nature of project.* This project is a R & D Project to improve multiple class teaching. Its sponsors are the Ministry of Education, Malaysia; Bernard Van Leer Foundation, Netherlands.; It was set up in December 1979;

b) *Project objectives.* To upgrade the academic achievement of pupils in small rural schools, to upgrade the skills of teachers in handling multiple classes, and to adapt or develop teaching-learning resource materials for multiple class teaching.

c) *Implementation of the project.* The areas it serves are the rural districts of Sabah having multiple class teaching. Its functions include the development of instructional materials for both teachers and pupils, a Teachers' Guide Book and Evaluation of the materials produced.

Teacher resource centre and mobile libraries project

a) *Nature of the project.* It is a project to provide for extensive library use through mobile libraries in the rural areas. Its sponsor is ESSO Corporation.

b) *Project objectives.* To aid in the teaching of the sciences and new mathematics, to develop the reading habits of children in Terengganu; to encourage rural pupils to strive for excellence and to assist needy students at secondary school and university level.

c) *Implementation of the project.* It serves the rural districts of Terengganu. Its functions include the provision of four mobile libraries which ply the rural districts of Terengganu, the offer of cash awards to outstanding pupils from secondary and primary schools in Kemaman, the setting up of a Resource Centre fully equipped with audio-visual aids and modern teaching facilities for use by teachers in the state and ESSO scholarships and grants which assist needy students at secondary school and university levels.

Project TABIKA

a) *Nature of the project.* Taman Bimbingan Kanak-Kanak (TABIKA) or Child Play Group Centre is a pre-school programme implemented as part of the Family Development Programme designed to upgrade the quality of rural life.

Its main sponsor is the Ministry of National and Rural Development. The programme was started in 1969.

b) *Project objectives.* Its primary objective is to meet the social, physical, emotional, spiritual, mental and development needs of children especially from low income groups with priority given to those in rural areas.

c) *Implementation of the project.* The TABIKA programme is a nationwide programme and TABIKA centres can be found in every state especially in the rural areas.

Besides promoting the development of children through various educational activities and play, the TABIKA has other functions. It provides supplementary feeding and regular medical check-ups for the children. It creates opportunities to educate parents and involve them in running the centres. It provides employment for rural youth, for only local qualified leaders are accepted for training in order that they will return to their own village on completion of the course and form the work force for the programme.

NEPAL

Nepal, though not big in size, has a wide range of climates according to altitude and location and remains one of the least developed among developing nations in the world. Its resources are extremely limited and most of what is available cannot be easily harnessed because of the rough terrain and lack of sound infrastructure. The population is 16 million.

The caste system still persists among major ethnic communities and the social, cultural and economic condition of a community has a strong relationship to the caste to which it belongs.

Nepali, which is the national language, is the mother tongue of 58.3 per cent of the people. There are 11 other major languages and several dialects spoken by different communities in the country.

Relevance of education to rural development

The Nepalese are a predominently agricultural people. Industrially, the country is still in its infancy. One of the biggest hurdles in development is transportation difficulties caused by the topography and the economic status of the country.

Educational system. Education has been considered as an important and integral component of the development process. With the sudden opening of the flood gates of education in the 1950s followed by an increasing demand for education, schools began to be set up in different parts of the country. Considerable educational progress took place between 1950 and 1970. With the introduction of the National Education System Plan in 1971, there was further expansion of education during 1971-1980.

The main aims of the National Education Plan are:

i) democratizing education by extending educational facilities all over the country, especially in the rural and remote areas;

ii) promoting national integration by adopting a common curriculum; and

iii) providing vocational and technical bias to education.

The educational structure consists of five years of primary education, two years of lower secondary education and three years of upper secondary. Besides this, adult and non-formal education programmes of varying categories and durations are also implemented.

On the technical side, schools provide three years of instruction plus one year on-the-job training. The higher two years of instruction lead to intermediate certification, followed by a further two years, leading to a Bachelor's degree and another two years to a Master degree. A doctorate degree normally takes 3 years.

Educational underdevelopment in rural areas. Despite significant quantitative growth several problems have persisted. Some of the indicators of these deficiences are:

a) The quality of education in terms of pupil achievement has not improved much.

b) There are glaring differences in performance of schools located in the remote and hill districts, and those located in the urban areas.

c) The drop-out rate at primary level and failure rate at the final School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination remain at high levels.

d) Girls' enrolment rate in schools of all levels remains low.

Causes of educational underdevelopment. Although education is only one of the many factors that contribute to rural development, it occupies the most important place. The poor quality of education, education not based on rural needs, and confinement of education to school have seriously affected the rural masses. While the percentage of rural children's enrolment itself is very low, shortcomings

such as poor quality and limited educational opportunities have compounded the problem, giving rise to higher drop-out and repetition rates.

Despite the increasing awakening of the people and government towards the importance of education, these are certain ingrained drawbacks that characterize the educational scene.

Regarding the difference in access to education based on sex it is a common phenomenon that has been noted in many underdeveloped countries. In Nepal in 1978 there were an estimated 3,274,000 children of school-going age (6-15 years) of which only 38 per cent were attending school. Among them 29.6 per cent were male students and only 8.4 per cent were girls.

The socio-economic differences in access to education are not limited to female children. They also apply to males, eventhough, as stated above, there is a generally higher preference for sending male children to school than their female counterparts.

The second area of weakness in school attendance falls short of enrolment, with the consequence that many children are left behind in the progression of classes either as repeaters or as drop-outs.

One of the most important areas of weakness is related to teachers, more training and motivation can go a long way in enhancing the quality of education in rural areas. But, usually due to the low level of educational attainment in the rural areas, good teachers are not locally available and the rural setting is not the sector that can attract the best of them from outside.

The teacher deficiency is not only in the area of their training but even more in the area of their motivation.

Selected Experimental projects dealing with the problems of education in rural areas. The following projects are implemented on a pilot basis to resolve some of the problems of underdevelopment of education in rural areas.

The projects have the following emphases: The Integrated Hill Development Project (IHDP) is built around a new improved communication link. Koshi Hill Area Development Project (KHARDEP) emphasizes the improvement of agricultural productivity, particularly the improvement in the quality of health and education services. The Seti Project is a specially designed "Education for Rural Development Project" which emphasizes making curriculum relevant to rural life. Improving the quality and quantity of community participation is another emphasis of this project.

The Lahachowk Project is an experiment to find out how a school can work as a change-agent to improve the quality of life of the school community. Equal access of girls in education is another educational project which strives to improve the quality and quantity of participation of women in development activities. The technical school programme is another innovative project which has made an attempt to train lower-level technicians locally in the remote areas to ensure the availability of the technicians required for rural development.

Relevance of education to rural development

Integrated Hill Development Project (IHDP). The general objective of the project is to maintain ecological balance and improve the living conditions of the people. The project has a comprehensive programme of education – formal, non-formal and training.

The objectives of formal education under IHDP are to:

a) provide and expand educational opportunities with a particular emphasis on poor and orphan students;

b) fulfil the skilled manpower requirements for development work by providing suitable scholarships;

c) enhance in-school programmes; and

d) encourage teaching as a skill by giving short-term training.

Koshi Hill Area Rural Development Project (KHARDEP). Another rural development project that includes an education component is KHARDEP. The aim of the educational component of the project is human resource development. The objectives of the education programme of the project are:

a) health care training for village level health workers;

b) development of in-service teacher training;

c) in-service agricultural training for JTA's; and

d) conduct of functional literacy programmes.

The KHARDEP assists 604,000 people in four hill districts of the Koshi Zone. On average the literacy rate for males is about 24 per cent and for females, 3 per cent.

The Seti Education for Rural Development Project (Seti Project). This project is entirely devoted to rural transformation through education. The objectives of the Seti Project are:

a) the improvement of existing educational facilities and institutions with special attention to improve education and the reduction of school drop-outs;

b) the expansion of primary education;

c) the teaching of relevant scientific knowledge and skills;

d) the revision of curricula and textbooks; and

e) the increase in educational opportunities to backward areas and groups.

The Lahachok Project. This is another project devoted to rural development through education. The objectives of the project are to:

a) carry out an educational programme which is integrated with the overall rural development relevant to the socio-economic and development needs of micro-communities;

b) mobilize the local people to participate in and benefit from educational programmes through the medium of the school which plays the central role in the development of the community; and

c) develop an environment whereby indigenous resources are used for the educational and developmental activities of the community.

Equal Access of Women to Education Programme (EAWEP) Education for Girls and Women. The project started with the following basic considerations:

a) the possibility of increasing girls' enrolment with the staffing of schools by lady teachers; and

b) a need for a social change agent who can launch social programmes to enlighten the masses on the importance of female education.

The female teacher can be expected to form a significant force in this respect.

At present the EAWE Project is conducting teacher training and upgrading programmes for rural girls. Those who have studied up to high school are given primary teacher training, and those below high school level education are offered an upgrading programme. Under this programme the girls are admitted to local schools. When they complete the studies up to high school level, they are given teacher training in one of the campuses of the Institute of Education.

During training, they are given scholarship and free hostel facilities.

Overlapping in the efforts of the agencies may in itself be a wastage, if the efforts are not orchestrated. So a suggestion can be put forward that a high level co-ordinating committee representing agencies involved in rural development activities be formed. This committee will be responsible in all policy matters.

The problem of educational wastage is basically academic and social. Teacher training should be revitalized and made compulsory for the profession.

Increasing parental concern over their children's education is another strategy to decrease the number of drop-outs and repetition. For this, adult education must be effective. This will be one of the most effective strategies.

PAKISTAN

Pakistan covers an area of 796,095 sq km and has a population of about 93 million people. About 45 per cent of the population consists of children under 14 years of age.

About 71 per cent of the population lives in 45,000 villages in rural areas. These people are directly or indirectly involved in agriculture. There is a wide disparity between the size of their holdings. More than 30 per cent of farm owners operate an area of less than one acre (0.4 hectare), 66 per cent of the farm owners have a farm of 5 acres or less and a massive 84 per cent own a holding of 12.5 acres or less. About 40 to 50 per cent of the rural population consists of landless people who work as share-croppers and farm-labourers.

Relevance of education to rural development

In spite of all the efforts to universalize education at primary level, the objective has not been achieved. According to available data, the literacy rate in Pakistan is about 26.2 per cent. Most of the literate people live in urban areas. A further analysis of the problem shows that only 17.33 per cent of the people in rural areas are literate. About 26.24 per cent of rural males and 7.33 per cent of rural females are literate. Similarly the retention rate at primary level is about 50-60 per cent and even less in rural areas, which is also very low as compared to other countries of the region.

Educational system. The Constitution of Pakistan puts education on the Concurrent Legislative List of the Federal and Provincial Governments. The formal education system is of a multi-stage type. The first stage, called primary, comprises Classes I to V and enrolls children of age-group 5+ to 9+. Next is a three-year middle stage constituting Classes VI to VIII within the age group 10+ to 12+. The secondary stage includes Classes IX and X and caters to the 13+ and 14+ age-group. It is followed by the intermediate (high secondary) stage of Classes XI to XII. The average age of students in this stage is 15 to 16 years. Classes XI and XII are considered as part of college education. The duration of degree stage is two years i.e. Classes XIII and XIV, corresponding to age-group 17+ and 18+. It is a first degree and "Baccalaureate" degree awarded in Arts or Science. The duration of post secondary education varies in technical and professional fields.

Very recently an experiment in the nature of multi-structures at primary level, splitting primary level into Classes I to III followed by IV to V, has been carried out.

Education is also imparted through the non-formal system and Islamic Madrasas in various fields and subjects.

Educational underdevelopment in rural areas

a. *Indicators.* The major indicators for underdevelopment in education in rural areas are: (i) low literacy rate; (ii) low enrolment; (iii) high drop-out rate; (iv) low retention; and (v) high class repetition.

b. *Major causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas.* Various causes of pupil wastage have been reported in the literature. However, recently in a teachers' workshop (1985) the question was analysed thoroughly by the participants from all over the country. Going through the literature, one can easily delineate the following main causes of the dropping-out and class repetition.

Socio-economic conditions in the area. Generally speaking, people living in rural areas are poor and cannot afford education. They utilize children on the farm, use them to mind their brothers and sisters at home, or put them on some job at an early age to get financial resources for the family. Sometimes, even if they like to send their children to school, their feudal lords may not like it, and thus create a lot of social and financial problems for them. Thus the present generation are still unable to change their centuries old life style.

Distance between school and residence. It is common that due to shortage of schools and hostel facilities children have to walk many miles from home to

school and back. The situation becomes worse when they have to pack a heavy bag in all types of weather. The result is loss of interest. (Girls in rural areas cannot go beyond their own village).

Inadequate facilities. Facilities like classrooms, furniture, equipment, and sometimes even teachers are inadequate. Often, there is a single teacher, teaching all the subjects to all classes, who thus cannot pay full attention to his students. Sometimes no buildings are available and children learn under trees. When even trees are not available, they learn in the open under the sun.

Teachers lacking adequate training. Lack of professional training not only leads to defective teaching but it also creates many problems like passive attitudes towards work, lack of interest, keeping all the children at one level of comprehension and understanding, corporeal punishment, lack of counselling and guidance, and lack of a sense of responsibility.

Lack of incentives for teachers. Low salaries, lack of housing and transport facilities have an adverse effect on the teachers' efficiency.

High teacher-student ratio. On the average the teacher-student ratio is 1:60, which is very high. Even if a teacher is very efficient and qualified, it is not possible to pay full attention to each and every student.

Imperfect curriculum. Children at an early stage of schooling must study about six or severn subjects. Apart from this, they have to learn various languages other than their mother tongue, which becomes a problem for them.

Lack of research and planning. An example of a lack of research and planning at primary level is the school timetable which does not make any allowance for cultivation and harvest times.

These are the major causes common in almost all the areas but the gravity of the problem becomes worse when more than one causes combine together. The combinations may differ from area to area and from region to region but the results are the same, i.e. lack of interest and motivation among the students, who then prefer to leave the school and work on the farm or migrate to urban areas in search of work.

Innovative approaches. Many innovative approaches have been introduced in the country since its independence. Some of these innovations are:

1. Establishment of curriculum research and development centres in all the provinces, and curriculum wing in the Ministry of Education.

2. Introduction of an Experimental Pilot Project Integrating Education with Rural Development (EPPIERD) in collaboration with UNESCO and UNICEF on a limited scale in Islamabad. This project is now renamed Rural Education and Development (READ).

3. Qualitative improvement of primary education, by improved supervision, undertaken through a world bank project on primary education.

4. Under the Special Priority Development Programme expansion of primary education through Mosque schools.

5. Introduction of agro-technical subjects in schools.

6. Introduction of teaching kits in primary schools.

7. Establishment of an Open University (AIOU) using a distance learning system. This University has disseminated education to thousands of people through broadcast and non-broadcast media.

8. The Open University (AIOU) has further innovated programmes like FEPRA (Functional Education Project for Rural Areas), now called BFEP (Basic Functional Education Programme) which has been successful in educating adult villagers.

9. Establishment of a Literacy and Mass Education Commission (LAMEC) to propagate literacy and education in the country, with special attention to the rural masses.

10. Agency for Barani Areas Development (ABAD) has been established. The agency in addition to work for general uplift of the rural areas, propagates education through formal and non-formal means.

11. Educational programmes broadcast on PTV (ETV).

The above list is not an exhaustive one. There are many other organizations (governmental and non-governmental) working for education of the masses in rural areas. However, it is clear that many innovations have been introduced and accepted. It also shows that continuous steps have been taken for innovative ventures to make education accessible, easy and cheap for all.

Selected Experimental projects dealing with problems of education in rural areas. Many projects are working to disseminate knowledge and provide education to the rural masses. One such project is *Rural Education and Development* (READ), started in rural areas of Islamabad (first known as EPPIERD). The project keeping in view its objectives prepared a five-component package and was launched in January, 1981. The components were: Women Education Centres; Village Workshop; Mosque Schools; Mohalla Schools; and Community Viewing Centres (Adult Literacy Centres). Encouraged by the positive findings in 1983, it was proposed to extend the project to 2,000 villages all over the country.

Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad also initiated an experimental project called "FEPRA" i.e. *Functional Education Project for Rural Areas.* FEPRA was set up by AIOU to help decide how to provide education for the uplift of the rural masses. To date, FEPRA has developed and applied:

a) methods for conducting field research and gathering feedback from rural learners;

b) a procedure for providing information and feedback to course production teams, in collaboration with Nation Building Departments;

c) an outreach system which carries basic functional courses to village learning groups using distance teaching methods; and

d) learning material composed of recorded cassettes and flip charts for agricultural credit system, livestock management, poultry farming, electric wiring and child care.

After the completion of the pilot phase, an evaluation exercise was conducted by ODA/AIOU team. The report showed that the project has successfully evolved a workable strategy to educate rural masses. According to the recommendation of the Evaluation Team, AIOU transformed FEPRA into BFEP (Basic Functional Education Programme) since July 1985.

Very recently the Allama Iqbal Open University introduced another important innovative approach towards introducing population planning to the rural masses. The University, in collaboration with the Pakistan Post Office Department and Population Planning Association of Pakistan, started a *pilot project to train* 1,000 *branch postmasters* (BPM's), working in rural areas. This group of trainees is comprised to village local leaders, teachers, Imams (religious leaders) and shopkeepers. The collaboration was very useful in terms of cost i.e., the University prepared the written (illustrated) material, PPA paid the printing charges and Pakistan Post Office mailed the material without charge. This way the material for education/training was imparted in a very smooth, cheap and easy way.

The branch postmasters have a larger interaction and contact with village population including ladies and also write and read letters for them. This sort of close contact with a person trained in population planning might give a momentum to the efforts taken in this direction. The experiment is going to be expanded to a larger number of BPM's and is expected to include field workers of other departments like agriculture, education (teachers), and health.

PHILIPPINES

The surface area of the Philippines is 300,000 sq km. Ninety per cent of this area covers only 11 islands, while the country comprises approximately 7,100 islands, scattered all over the archipelago.

Today, there is an estimated population of 51.9 million, with a population growth rate of 2.4 per cent. The rural population is 61 per cent. Although there is widespread urbanization all over the islands, the greater majority live in rural areas where agriculture is a way of life. The illiteracy rate is 15 per cent (1980). There are more than 100 linguistic, cultural and racial groups speaking a total of about 87 dialects. Pilipino and English are used as the media of instruction.

Educational system. Education has always been the central element in the thrust for development, and is particularly addressed to providing more educational opportunities to rural areas. The government is fully cognizant of its responsibility to provide basic education to all its citizens, and this duty is embodied in the Constitution, which provides for a "free, compulsory and integrated system of education

in the elementary". The Education Act of 1982 also provides for the educational system to reach out to educationally deprived communities, in order to give meaningful reality to their membership in the national society, to enrich their civic participation in the community and national life, and to unify all Filipinos into a free and just nation.

The education system embraces both formal and non-formal education. Within the formal structure are 3 levels of education, namely: elementary (ages 7-12), secondary (13-16), and tertiary or higher education (19-21).

The bulk of enrolment is in the elementary level of education. Of a total of 39,041 schools in the country in the 3 levels, 91.18 per cent are public schools and 8.85 per cent are private, (1983-1984 data). There is no established barangay (citizen assembly) where a public and/or private school is not located, even in the remotest barangays, except in some villages of ethnic tribes. At least this situation meets the requirement for a "universal primary education". However, the claim for quality education is an aspect the government has to reckon with.

In the secondary schools, enrolment has increased by 8.4 per cent but this is still below the target. Like the elementary, there are more public than private schools. On the other hand in higher education only 18 per cent of the enrolment is in state colleges and universities. In recent years, there is however a proliferation of state colleges and universities. Deputy Minister Fernando A. Bernardo in his paper presented during the conference on "Standards and Viability Crisis and Responses in Higher Education", on 21 June 1985, indicated that at present, there are 77 state colleges and universities all over the country, far too many for a small country like the Philippines. He also pointed out that the real problem is more a question of quality than a question of number.

Educational underdevelopment in rural areas. To ascertain and quantify disparities in education, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MECS) conducted a study in 1979. The study measured literacy rate, participation rate, cohort survival rate, achievement levels, and transition rates from elementary to secondary. For participation, achievement and survival the national cut-offs were 75, 47 and 67 per cent, respectively. Of the school districts examined, 23 were found to rank below these cut-off figures. Also, a total of 13,369 schools were categorized as depressed, disadvantaged and underserved.

In 1983-1984, the figure for elementary and secondary levels of education shows the status of educational underdevelopment:

Performance indicators	*Elementary*	*Secondary*
1. Participation rate	89.91%	27.77%
2. Retention rate	90.65%	92.27%
3. Survival rate	65.23%	74.97%
4. Dropout rate	2.72%	5.9 %
5. Achievement level	47.00%	not available
6. Cost per pupil	₱ 479.29	– do –

The above data shows that the elementary schools have good participation and retention rates and that the problem of children withdrawing from school before completing the primary cycle is not serious. Enrolment increase may be due to Government incentives like salary increases, living allowance and allowances for supplies and materials. The main issue is quality instruction or excellence, which greatly affects relevance of education to rural environment.

Major causes of educational underdevelopment. Disparities come from various constraints:

a) Low-density population: The population being scattered in far flung areas, there are certain regions/places underdeveloped and underserved. Also, the policy of 1:35 teacher-pupil ratio, due to limited financial resources tends to aggrevate the situation.

b) Geographic conditions: The country has 7,100 small islands, criss-crossed by long winding rivers, high mountain ranges, and wide oceans. With poor roads and poor communications, many villages and schools are virtually isolated.

c) Low income of villagers: The desire to acquire education is further constrained by the rising cost of living, unemployment, calamities, and disturbances to peace and order. The poverty-stricken families generally show antipathy to schooling. They claim that education is a luxury to an empty stomach. Because of poverty and malnutrition, schooling is not an attractive instrument for making a living.

d) Centralized and inflexible system of educational delivery: The centralization of decisions and management functions put the rural areas to a great disadvantage. Very few resources seep down to their level.

Most specifically the problem of wastage and quality of learning is more prevalent in the rural areas than in the urban. Certain specific causes have been identified in a survey made by the Planning Service of the MECS. These are the distance to the nearest school; poverty; illness and poor health; lack of interest; school contributions; fear from teacher and inferiority complex; mobility of family; and dislike for schooling.

Innovative programmes/projects

For the elementary level

a) The learning centre on wheels project is designed for deprived children at the pre-school level. Mobile learning centres provided with audio-visual aids and other instructional materials visit sites with 50 pre-school children (25 per session) for 6 hours a week.

b) Special education centres are being established to serve gifted and handicapped children in the rural areas.

c) A supplementary feeding programme provides snacks and lunch supplements prepared from foreign donations, indigenous foods or a combination of both.

d) Multi-grade and combined classes are organized in sparsely populated areas.

e) Project Paglingap or caring for others provides education in home economics, agriculture, fisheries, etc. to children in isolated places. The school is viewed as a self-contained mini-community where parents volunteer to provide guidance to pupils.

f) Mobile tent school programme is a non-graded school system for the nomadic cultural groups. It responds to the socio-economic needs and cultural values of the minority groups.

g) "Moderasah" is an Islamic educational institution for Arabic and Islamic studies for both elementary and secondary levels.

h) Project stay and Balik-Aral is a project to retrieve school leavers to keep potential drop-outs in school until they finish grade VI.

For the secondary level

a) On the concept of self-help and building self-reliance by using local funds, rural communities are developing barangay high schools into community centres.

b) To provide effective instruction in practical arts; an experiment was carried out with students working in groups by subject area, using a limited set of tools in each group.

c) Integrated learning and teaching in work experiences and value orientations.

For tertiary level

a) The "Para Teachers" for cultural minorities in Cotabato area project, supports 60 cultural minority teachers for cultural communities to be trained in a 12-term programme.

b) The Bayanitan School Programme of Palawan National Agricultural College offers all agricultural courses during the first 2 years, directly in the farms, and the academic courses in the college campus.

Future directions/thrusts

a) Quality improvement encompassing all levels through a comprehensive development plan giving priority to rural schools.

b) Values development as demanded by our contemporary social order and upholding moral and ethical values.

c) Cultural development. Cultural opportunities and the products of cultural achievements are opened to many rather than to a select few.

d) Sports development. "Sports For All" which guarantees to every citizen the practice of sports.

e) Efficiency and effectiveness. Because of limited resources, educational service will be delivered more efficiently.

f) Equity. Disadvantaged areas are to be allotted a greater share of development funds.

g) Agricultural productivity geared towards the agro-industrial requirements of the countryside.

THAILAND

Thailand has an area of 542,108 sq km and a population of about 50,000,000 people.

The population in four southern border provinces, as well as Thai people living along the Thai-Burmese, Thai-Lao, and Thai-Kampuchea borders speak different languages. Their cultures differ from the majority of Thai people. These differences have posed some difficulties in the universalization of education in the rural areas.

The Education system. Thai education took a little more than a hundred years to evolve from its traditional form to the modern system that is known today. There was an alphabet used at least as early as the Nan Chow Period and later, King Ramkamhaeng modified the Thai Yhun and Thai Khmer alphabets and developed the present Thai alphabet in 1283.

All educational activities at present reflect the national policy of free compulsory universal education. All educational management comes under the supervision of the State.

Education consists of (1) pre-school; (2) elementary; (3) secondary general education; (4) vocational technical education; (5) teacher education; (6) higher education; and (7) adult non-formal education.

The National Education policy ensures that all Thai citizens are able to communicate in Thai, and promotes various kinds of out-of-school education. Education is conceived as a continuing life-long process, which promotes the quality of life of the citizen and enables him to live a useful life.

Educational underdevelopment in rural areas. With the expansion of primary schools during the period 1970 to 1982, different indicators of educational underdevelopment have changed dramatically. The quantitative aspects of

educational development have been achieved, at least for the primary level of education, while the qualitative development still lags far behind, particularly in the Northeast region. A survey undertaken in 1981 has provided several indicators of educational underdevelopment discussed below.

Indicators of educational underdevelopment

Participation or enrolment rates. During 1970 to 1982, with the expansion of primary schools to remote sub-districts, the enrolment ratios increased from 82.4 to 97.0 in 1980 and dropped back to 94.9 in 1982. However, enrolments are increasing in the rural areas.

It is anticipated that in 1985 the enrolment ratio will be at 99 per cent due to the effect of the non-formal education programme. The children in the very remote areas will be provided with an opportunity to get some education at the learning centres in their own villages.

There is no significant difference in the enrolment ratios between the different regions, nor between the sexes.

Drop-out rate/retention rate. Based on projections of the annual trend, it is expected that the overall drop-out rate for the six years of primary school will be about 25 per cent in 1984. This will be an increase from the 1982 figure by about 34 per cent. The drop-out rate has, however, increased since 1976. This increase in drop-out is expected as the system moves from being selective and restrictive to open access. The drop-out at the primary/secondary levels transitions also shows similar trends.

Repetition rate. Overall repetition in 1982 rate was 6.3 per cent, a decrease from 15.5 per cent recorded in 1972. There are no regional differences in repetition rates. Repetition seems to be the highest in grade I.

Underachievement. The achievement rate, using performance of Thai language and Mathematics (for grade III) has increased substantially. The overall performance in Thai in 1980 was about 51.5 per cent, compared to 32.9 per cent in 1975; while in Mathematics the rates were 50.5 per cent in 1980 and 32 per cent in 1975. The urban area shows better achievement rates than the rural areas though the differences between the urban and rural are minimized.

Major causes of educational underdevelopment. The major causes contributing to educational underdevelopment in the rural areas of Thailand are:

i) the terrain and isolation of the locations inhabited by the people and schools built for their children;

ii) mobility of certain groups of people;

iii) illiteracy, poor health and poverty;

iv) negative attitude of people toward education;

v) tribal custom, languages and attitudes;

vi) irrelevancy of elementary school curriculum and teacher training to the needs of people in the rural areas. The curricula are urban-biased and emphasized theoretical aspects more than practical aspects in teacher training institutes;

vii) inadequate road communication system, electricity, medical service, water supply and reading material as well as good opportunity for advancement for teachers; and

viii) highly centralized educational administration system.

Educational innovations for rural development. A number of government educational organizations are engaged in rural development. Within their resource limitations, each organization tried out somewhat similar approaches to develop itself and to promote rural development. Some selected approaches are presented here.

a) *Elementary school grouping approach.* Elementary schools are grouped into small (1-6 schools), medium (7-8 schools), and large groups (9 schools and over). Each member of the group can work and think collectively to support, improve, and help other members to perform their functions more effectively.

The school group administration committee comprises all principals, and elected teacher representatives whose numbers should not be less than half of the schools in the group and not more than the number of schools.

Thus, each school as a member of a group of schools undertakes to:

i) help by raising the standard of each of the other schools to the same level of quality;

ii) collect all data from each school;

iii) formulate groups development plan; and

iv) disseminate school information to the public.

b) *Secondary school grouping approach.* The Department of General Education's school grouping is meant to encourage schools to help each other, pooling resources so as to assist each other in their administration, academic, and school activities functions. This pooling of resources should increase the quality of education.

There are 15 school groups in Bangkok and 126 groups in the provinces, totalling 141 groups. There are between 6 and 20 schools in a group. The grouping depends on location and communication convenience.

The administrative committee of each group consists of all school principals or directors.

Some of the functions of these groups are to:

i) plan developmental strategies for the school quality development programme;

ii) provide consultation service to schools in the group concerning overall school matters;

iii) supervise, follow-up and evaluate the performance of schools in the group;

iv) co-ordinate between schools and outside agencies; and

v) advise the Department of General Education pertaining to abolishing schools, extending classes to a second stage, and providing data supporting budget proposals.

c) *Teacher college consortium.* According to the Teacher College Act of 1985, a teacher college is entitled to perform five functions, namely: teaching in various disciplines; research; in-service training; promoting arts and culture; and community service. There are 36 teacher colleges under the Department of Teacher Education. Thirty of them are in the provinces forming 8 consortiums.

Some of the duties the Consortium Administrative Committee performs are related to student enrolment, entrance examinations, staffing, budget, and curriculum and external affiliation.

d) *Community leader training for rural development project.* Rural development is the result of co-operative work between the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives, Ministry of Public Health, and Ministry of Education, soon to be joined by the Ministry of Industry. This project is aimed at bridging the gap between government officials and villagers. At the operational level, the project is a co-operative one between Department of Teacher Education, Department of Religious Affairs, Department of Non-formal Education, Office of the National Cultural Commission, and Office of the National Elementary Education Commission, with the Department of Teacher Education playing the leading role. Nineteen teacher colleges in poor rural areas undertake training and supervising the field work of the leaders. For each village, three leaders (a teacher, a monk and a villager) are selected by village committees to be trained at the teacher college nearby.

These leaders are trained in techniques and knowledge of rural development, both in terms of attitude development as well as physical development. They are to lead villagers to develop their village, through the various projects assigned by the government as well as originating their own projects.

During 1984, 2,904 community leaders were trained, and in 1985, 2,880 leaders were trained. The working performances of these leaders on the whole were very successful. This project will be terminated in 1986 because of shortage of funds.

e) *Rural teacher training project.* This project is part of an effort by teacher colleges to develop villages as part of their curriculum. A group of prospective teachers is sent out to practice teaching at schools in rural areas. These students are to help develop schools and their living quarters so that they will be examples for the villagers. They help pupils to be neat, clean and to participate in rural development. From the school site, they will expand their effort to the village itself.

Future trends. Since the present government has laid down a firm policy upon the continuity of developing infrastructures in rural areas and has ordered five ministries to speed up rural development, the future is expected to see the improvement of an integration of rural development. As a result, there would be better education for the people as well as more opportunity for rural people to participate in higher education. The rural area is expected to progress fast in education and infrastructure, development, vocation and moral upliftment.

The National Rural Development Committee under the Office of the Prime Minister has organized provincial and district rural development committees. This enables rural development, including educational development, to originate from a lower level, and become integrated at provincial and national level during the planning process. It is foreseen that more authority will be delegated to local government.

Better living, better government services in law enforcement, health and agricultural services, compulsory education up to nine years, eradication of illiteracy, better roads and means of communication, electricity, drinking water and irrigation water supply are ranked as a high priority in the national development plan for the next five years, starting in 1985.

The co-operation of central government, local government, people and private organizations is encouraged. This is indeed an integrated approach in rural development with emphasis on self-reliance of the part of the people in the rural areas.

Chapter Three

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES PROVIDING EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

Each participant from the member countries represented in this Study Group Meeting reported selected innovative educational projects and programmes focused on rural development. These projects are selected to illustrate the variety of efforts that have been expanded in the different countries toward the development of the rural areas. They are by no means meant to represent the vast range of projects and programmes that are currently on-going in these countries. A total of 26 projects were analysed. These selected projects or programmes for each country are analysed by the country representative concerned on the basis of the following questions which were developed by the group.

1. What are the problem(s) addressed by the projects or programmes?
2. What are the foci of the projects or programmes, in terms of:
   a) target populations; and
   b) the indicators of educational underdevelopment?
3. How have the projects/programmes attempted to make education relevant to the rural environment?
4. What attempts have been made in the projects/programmes to integrate with the overall developmental efforts of the rural areas?
5. What are some of the demands of the projects/programmes in terms of added facilities, equipment, finance and manpower?
6. What are the agencies involved in these projects/programmes?

Foci of the projects/programmes

Problem being addressed. As most of these projects and programmes have addressed more than one interrelated problem, the analysis is based on the main emphasis. The problems addressed by the projects reported included raising the quality of education, access to education, literacy, vocational/technical education, community development and teacher training. The concerns related to quality and access are best represented. The problem of access to education is the main concern of 12 of the projects reported, while quality is the main concern of ten. Literacy, which is of course related to access, is the main concern of five projects. It would then seem that access still remains a primary concern of most of the countries represented while concern for quality is beginning to gain ground.

Problem statement	*Number* of responses*	*Per cent*
Access	12	34%
Quality	10	28%
Literacy	5	17%
Vocational/technical	3	8%
Community development	3	8%
Teacher education	2	5%

* There can be more than one response recorded for each project.

Target population. The target population refers to the levels of education in the formal system and in the non-formal system, the client group. The analysis indicates that the main target population for these projects and programmes is the first level of education (40 per cent). This is to be expected as the target population is related to the main problem of access. The next popular target population is in the area of non-formal education (30 per cent) where out-of-school youth (17 per cent) and adults (13 per cent) are the target populations. This is obviously related to the problem of literacy and vocational training. The other target areas are teacher education (13.5 per cent), secondary level of education (10 per cent) and technical vocational education (3.5 per cent). It is interesting to note the relatively low ranking of secondary education as a target population. It would seem that the concern for both quantitative and qualitative improvement is yet to reach this level of education in most of the countries represented.

Target population		*Number of responses*	*Per cent*
First level (primary)		12	40%
Out-of-school youth	non-formal	5	16.5%
Adults	non-formal	4	13.5%
Teacher education		4	13.5%
Secondary level of education		3	10%
Technical/vocational education		1	3.5%
Others		1	3.5%

Type of educational system (formal/non-formal). Another aspect of the foci of these projects/programmes which can be analysed is in term of the formal and non-formal systems of education. It would seem that at this point of time the projects/programmes focused on the formal system (70 per cent) out number

the ones focused on the non-formal system (30 per cent). The emphasis on the formal system is to be expected as the national priority is in this area.

Indicators of educational underdevelopment. One of the areas of concern in this Meeting has been the definition and identification of indicators which can be used as measures of educational underdevelopment. While this analysis of the selected projects and programmes in terms of the expressed indicators of educational underdevelopment may be similar to the analysis of the problem statements, it would be useful in the context of the theme for this Meeting to look at these indicators. The focus on participation rate accounts for about 33 per cent of the projects/programmes and the focus on underachievement accounts for about 27 per cent. Next focus is on the literacy rate and drop-out rate accounting for 16 per cent each. The other category (8 per cent) includes all the functional education and community development projects/programmes.

Indicators	*Number of responses*	*Per cent*
Participation rate	12	33%
Underachievement	10	27%
Literacy rate	5	16%
Dropout rate	5	16%
Others	3	8%

Relevance of education to the rural environment

This section attempts to analyse the degree of relevance of educational projects/programmes to the rural environment. Relevance, of course, may be categorized at different levels. It could be in terms of the utility of the knowledge such as vocational training, agricultural or health education. It could be in terms of the use of appropriate methods and curriculum content or in terms of research information available on the target population.

In the analysis of the projects/programmes roughly using the categorization above, it is obvious that there is no marked preference for any of the categories. The use of cultural/community based material, particularly in literacy and primary level education accounts for 23 per cent of the projects/programmes reported. A similar percentage, i.e. 23 per cent, is accounted for by vocational/functional education. Projects which do not seem to attempt to make education relevant to the rural environment make up 19 per cent of the total.

The important thing to note is that a large number of these projects (80 per cent) attempt to make education relevant to the environment.

Type of relevance	*Number of responses*	*Per cent*
Use of cultural/community based material	6	23%
Functional/vocational education	6	23%
Appropriate approach	3	15%
Use of research data	3	15%
Others	3	15%
Not relevant	5	19%

Co-ordination/integration with other development efforts

The Meeting has come to appreciate the importance and effectiveness of integrated efforts in rural development. Change in the rural areas can only come about through the concerted and co-ordinated efforts of all different agencies. Education by itself cannot bring about change. Hence in the analysis of these projects/programmes, it is necessary to study the extent of integration of educational efforts with the other rural developmental efforts.

For purposes of analysis, the integration is categorized into (a) complete integration; (b) co-ordination with other agencies; and (c) vocational training. However, one of the interesting findings of the analysis is the high relative percentage (37 per cent) of projects/programmes which are not directly integrated into the total efforts in rural development. Projects/programmes reporting full integration comprise about 40 per cent and those with co-ordination with one other agency, about 15 per cent.

Type of integration	*Number of responses*	*Per cent*
Complete	12	40%
Partial (with one other agency)	5	15%
Vocational	2	17%
No direct integration	11	37%

Demand

Another concern of the Meeting is the demand that a programme makes on available resources. The higher the demands, the more difficult it is to achieve institutionalization. While it is not possible to estimate the various degrees of demand in terms of high, medium, etc., it is possible, however, to analyse these projects in terms of types of demands.

Relevance of education to rural development

The important finding is that most projects (92 per cent) indicated that they do place some kind of demands on the system. These demands are of different kinds and an attempt is made to identify the main types of demands.

Of these, demands on funds are the greatest, accounting for about 38 per cent, followed by material (28 per cent) and teachers (16 per cent). It is interesting to note the relatively low demand for teachers.

Types of demands	*Number of responses*	*Per cent*
Funds	11	38%
Materials	7	28%
Funds and materials	3	20%
Teachers	5	16%
None	2	8%

Agency involvement

Finally, the projects/programmes were analysed in terms of the involvement of different types of agencies, and perhaps more importantly the amount of local participation, as ultimately self-support would be an important element in the institutionalization process of these projects.

From the analysis, it is seen that a large number of projects/programmes are funded by the local government agencies (55 per cent) of which 13 per cent are the local universities.

It would seem that if we include the category where there is joint involvement, then the government involvement is very high, accounting to more than 83 per cent. There is only one self-initiated (by the community itself) project.

Type of agency	*Number of responses*	*Per cent*
Government	12	42%
University	4	13%
Government with external help	7	28%
External help	4	13%
None	1	3%

Concluding remarks

The chapter records an initial attempt to analyse different innovative educational projects/programmes for the rural areas in terms of the features considered

by the Meeting as crucial for success. It was hoped that the exercise will give a rough idea of the extent to which the projects and programmes reported at this Meeting subscribe to these features.

However, it should be borne in mind that the analysis is only based on a few selected projects and programmes which were only briefly described in the different country papers. It is not meant to be a comprehensive study of all on-going projects and programmes in the countries represented nor is it based on in-depth studies of these projects.

Chapter Four

IMPRESSIONS FROM A FIELD VISIT TO SELECTED PROJECTS

The participants of the Regional Study Group Meeting visited two villages situated in the rural areas in the Northeast of Uttaraditt on 3 November 1985, as part of the programme of the Study Group Meeting. The first visit was to the Paang-Min Village, and the second, to the Pakvong Village.

Paang-Min Village

Paang-Min is a small village, with a population of only 420 people, constituting about 80 families. It occupies a land area of about 650 rai. No electricity is available yet. The major crops grown in the village are maize, rice and cotton, but with very low quantity and quality.

The people of Paang-Min migrated from Loei Province some 80 years ago. However, even today, they do not own any land. The land surrounding the village belongs to the people from other villages, so they mostly grow rice and maize on the uphills.

After receiving the mandate from the Government to assist in the development of this area and extend education in the village, Uttaraditt Teachers' College (UTC) initiated some rural development projects in 1982 as part of the Integrated Rural Development Programme of the village.

Objectives of the rural development projects. The main objective of the projects is to extend education to the village in a way more relevant to their everyday life, by:

i) motivating youths to take part in the activities of their particular interests;

ii) encouraging the villagers to co-ordinate their activities;

iii) giving proper advice to the villagers on food selection, drinking clean water, cleaning house, using organic fertilizer; and

iv) motivating villagers to take part in innovative activities.

Projects. The UTC, with the assistance from the Faculty of Nursing and Pharmacology and Dental Surgery of Chiang Mai University, Pitsanuloke Technical and Vocational School of Agriculture, and the Technical School at Paa-Yaa, has been able to establish the following low investment projects:

i) continuous running water supply;
ii) domestic fish-rearing;
iii) village-co-operative store;
iv) dental care for students;
v) medical centre; and
vi) crop funding.

Participants' obervations. The participants noted the interest, devotion and understanding of the UTC staff, village school (Academic Centre) and the farmers in the work so far done in the area. The elementary school served as an "Academic Centre". At the time of the visit the school was closed, being a weekend, and the participants did not see the students at work. However, they were shown the following:

The primary school. The only school in the village provides education from grades I to VI. There were 97 students comprising 98 per cent of the village total children population.

There were nine permanent teachers and four UTC teacher-trainees. On an average the student-teacher ratio was 9:1. The participants also saw with interest the fish pond at the school campus and the water lift made from locally available materials (by using cans and jars). Some teaching materials were seen in the class-rooms.

Village-water supply. A small dam constructed five years ago is now supplying drinking water. Almost all the houses in the village get enough water from this pond.

Fish ponds. Farmers have been encouraged to have a fish pond to cultivate fish for their own consumption and for sale. Some of the farmers pointed out that a limited quantity of fish was produced last year. The participants noted with concern the practice of farmers feeding the fish with termites, not because they are not approtiate food for fish but because of the possibility that the termites could multiply and eventually become a menace to the wooden houses. This needs experts' advice from the Department of Fisheries and Agriculture.

Summary of the participants' impressions from the visit.

The following Special features of the projects were identified:

The school has been chosen to be the centre or focal point of development projects. The teachers serve as motivators and innovators and they help to relate education to rural environment. The school being the Community Centre, and the teachers being motivators and innovators, it was expected that the diffusion and adoption rate of innovations would be high.

Pakvong Village

Pakvong is also a small village with a population of 600 people, comprising about 100 families. The village has recently been supplied with electricity and is situated in the valley where an Accelerated Rural Development Programme is constructing a road. The farmers grow various crops. Most of the villagers are land owners. The participants visited the 'Academic Centre' where a young headmaster along with his staff look after the community development work.

Objectives of the Community Development Project. Basically the project is programmed to train the village leaders (one monk, a teacher and a village leader) on:

i) their role in improving their community;

ii) establishing systematic and effective co-ordination between government agencies and the community; and

iii) encouraging other farmers to take active participation in developmental activities, keeping in view the above objectives of the project in 1982.

Projects. The UTC, with the help of local academic centre and local leaders, has started the following:

i) fish ponds;

ii) mango, lemon and guava growing;

iii) a co-operative store;

iv) vegetable growing – like fencing the house with plants having edible leaves; and

v) composting.

The centre gets technical support from the Department of Agriculture, Chiang Mai University.

Observations

Fish ponds: Only one fish pond was seen near the centre in a private home. It was noted, however that like in Paang-Min Village, termites were being fed to the fish, and the termite colonies were kept in the wooden house.

Mud-bricks: A part of the academic centre was constructed of beautiful bricks made by the people. The bricks are made of mud mixed with cement, thus costing much less than the commercial bricks.

Mango nursery: Close to the foot of the hills was a mango nursery owned by a group of 45 members. A number of mango seedlings were ready for budding/ grafting. It was learned that the money for this project came from the "King's

Fund" which was loaned without interest and without any period to repay it. This project, however, will have to find a market for the seedlings that are produced.

Co-operative store: The project runs a small co-operative store. There were 75 members of this enterprise. It was reported that the store earned about 30,000 Baht as net profit in 1984. The members were given 12 per cent profit (on their capital) and the rest of the money invested again to the co-operative.

Summary of the participants' impressions from the visit.

The following special features of the project were identified:

The enthusiasm and interest of the village leaders in the community projects is a positive factor to a better environment for education purposes.

The personal involvement of the headmaster and his staff in all the activities of the community serves as motivation to the people. They serve as change-agents in community development, thus making the school a centre of change and improvement.

There are varied community organizations and co-operatives. These organizations give the members increased opportunities in developing self-reliance and capability building.

The field visit was well organized by the educational authorities at Uttaraditt by sending part of their staff to accompany the participants of the Study Group Meeting visiting the two villages and facilitate their dialogue with rural families and community leaders.

Chapter Five

PROPOSAL FOR REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION AND PROPOSED NETWORKING OF INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

Overview

The problem of educational underdevelopment in rural areas in almost all of the countries of the Asia and Pacific region is a complex one. It can be dealt with more effectively through collaborative efforts of the countries in the region and in sharing their experiences and evolving common strategies.

On the basis of an in-depth analysis done by the Study Group on the causes of underdevelopment, it has become clear and imperative that an action plan at the regional level be evolved. Firstly, the nature and causes of educational underdevelopment are identical in most of the countries. Secondly, the sharing of experiences will promote understanding and goodwill among member states.

Elements of a regional plan of action

Any regional plan of action will have to take into consideration the various aspects which are essential for making a viable and relevant action plan. These aspects are as follows:

1. Mobilization and sharing of resources and the facilities availabile in terms of:
   - i) human resources;
   - ii) technological resources;
   - iii) physical facilities; and
   - iv) financial resources.
2. Exchange and development of:
   - i) expertise, and
   - ii) educational information pertaining to the development of education in rural areas with regard to research studies; projects/programmes; and innovations.
3. Evolving a mechanism for:

Proposed regional plan of action and networking of innovative projects

i) Co-ordination and collaboration among various agencies dealing with educational development programmes in rural areas both at the horizontal and vertical level;

ii) Initiating joint innovative research projects.

The Study Group Meeting recommends the development of a mechanism (action plan) for the following:

1. Effective co-ordination and collaboration among the countries of the region in their efforts to promote curriculum reforms reflecting rural development needs.

2. Evolution of suitable strategies to deal with the problem of underdevelopment of education in rural areas.

3. Working-out viable projects/programmes which may be taken either independently or jointly by the countries of the region.

4. Establishing the necessary linkages, both horizontal and vertical, among educational institutions and other extension agencies of the countries of the region.

5. Making provision for the creation and use of training facilities.

Strategies for operationalizing a regional action plan

Some of the strategies that could be used to operationalize the proposed regional action plan are suggested to:

1. Create an awareness among those concerned, including policy makers, with the issues/problems in educational underdevelopment in rural areas.

2. Develop a comprehensive integrated plan for rural development.

3. Mobilize various agencies/organizations concerned with rural development to co-operate and collaborate for the development of education in rural areas at various levels.

4. Involve the local community both at planning and implementation stages.

5. Enhance managerial and organizational capability so that the community becomes more responsive to the needs of educational development.

6. Ensure the improvement of educational programmes and services relevant to rural needs.

7. Facilitate regional co-operation and collaboration involving regional and international agencies.

8. Identify and popularize viable projects/programmes implemented in the region for educational development in the rural areas.

Proposal for a network for educational development in rural areas

Having analyzed the causes of underdevelopment of education in rural areas and country efforts to deal with these problems, it was realized that these problems could be overcome through concerted efforts of all agencies involved in rural development at both national and regional levels. There is, therefore, a need to evolve a strategy for educational development in the countries of the region through a network.

Thailand, Sri Lanka, Philippines and Japan have developed networks which could be relevant to the situations in other countries of the region. Their experiences show that certain innovative ideas can be undertaken with some institutional support to resolve problems confronting educational development on the basis of self-reliance and local initiative, rather than depending on outside assistance. To achieve their goals the countries rely on mutual co-operation and support. A network therefore is to be established, to facilitate the development and implementation of projects/programmes which have direct bearing on educational development in the rural areas.

The proposed network is based on the following basic assumptions:

1. Institutions can, by working with a common focus, complement and supplement each other's efforts.
2. The network promotes optimal use of available resources.
3. The network, based on mutual sharing of facilities and expertise, widens the horizon, and enables the implementors to evolve a more effective strategy.
4. The network facilitates a common understanding/agreement among co-operative agencies.

Developing the network

A network could be established at different levels and for different purposes. The following aspects could be considered while developing a network:

1. *Management aspects*
   a) policy and planning;
   b) conceptualization of programmes/projects;
   c) mobilization of resources; and
   d) designing/implementing strategies.

2. *Academic aspects*

   a) curriculum materials and teaching aids development;

   b) teacher training and training of other personnel;

   c) tools and techniques for monitoring programmes/projects; and

   d) research on rural educational development.

3. *Co-ordination and collaboration aspects*

   Infrastructure for co-ordination and collaboration.

4. *Linkages and support aspects*

   a) horizontal and vertical linkages, within the country and inter-country; and

   b) support of international agencies and organizations for rural educational development.

Chapter Six

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

To facilitate the improvement of education and make it relevant to the needs of the people in rural areas, the Meeting recommends the following activities to be pursued at national and international levels:

At national level

Policy, planning, management and administration of education

1. Education should take into accounnt the cultural variations, linguistic differences, economic disparities and social inequalities prevailing in the rural areas of various countries, within their national frameworks.

2. National governments should develop comprehensive long-term educational development plans geared towards integrated rural development.

3. Education in the rural areas should focus on improving the socio-economic and living conditions of the rural population.

4. Community participation should be encouraged in the formulating of the educational policy and in its implementation.

5. Educational policies should be geared towards making formal and non-formal systems of education complementary to each other.

6. Decentralization of educational management and administration is recommended for effective implementation of rural educational programmes by delegating power and responsibility commensurate to their level of authority.

Educational inputs

For improving the quality of teaching, teacher training, content of the curriculum and instructional materials, as well as for promoting support services and research, strengthening co-operation among various agencies and ensuring community participation, the Meeting recommends:

1. orienting educational administrators towards the need to improve school management and administration at local level with a view to the needs of rural people;

2. developing the necessary expertise for improvement of rural life through the establishment of agricultural/vocational/technical training institutions in rural areas for inculcation of skills relevant to their needs;

3. enhancing effective teaching and service to the rural community through re-oriented pre-service and in-service teacher training;

4. attracting better qualified and motivated teachers to rural schools by providing them with adequate remuneration and good working conditions;

5. devising specific performance indicators for evaluation of performance and effectiveness of programmes/personnel;

6. providing continuous support to projects initiated for rural development and to promote self-reliance;

7. making the curriculum more relevant to the needs of rural areas, taking note of the variation in life style, attitudes and social norms prevailing in the community;

8. undertaking try-out of the curriculum before it is adopted for large-scale implementation;

9. disseminating timely curriculum reform plans and programmes to educational personnel at all levels;

10. developing textbooks and supplementary materials for learners relevant to local conditions and to the needs of rural areas;

11. establishing a built-in system for evaluating curriculum effectiveness;

12. integrating curriculum contents of various subjects and thereby reducing the number of textbooks at the early primary stage of education;

13. promoting research studies aiming at better understanding of socio-economic and educational needs of rural population;

14. providing educational support services to rural communities through introducing new elements in the curriculum, through improved methods of teaching, utilizing locally available resources;

15. providing adequate support services, including guidance and counselling services to children and parents focused on:

    a) need for education,

    b) need for better health, nutrition and sanitation, and

    c) need for developing scientific outlook aiming to improve the quality of life;

16. developing a strong network to ensure linkages (both vertical and horizontal) with organizations involved in rural development within the country and inter-country;

17. establishing a co-ordinating body at the national level and its counterparts at district level to co-ordinate and implement educational development programmes;

18. stimulating the rural communities to participate actively in educational affairs and in the decision making process; and

19. encouraging the local school to serve as a centre for the community through:

    a) dissemination of information and knowledge, widening the horizon of rural people,

    b) popularizing innovative methods of work, and

    c) inculcating income generating skills.

At international level:

Providing support for:

1. conducting joint studies and collaborative research at bilateral and regional levels on the relevance of education to the needs of rural population, highlighting countries' innovative experiences, projects;

2. synthesizing the findings of such studies and research for dissemination in the region;

3. undertaking a joint state of the art review on all research and developmental efforts in individual countries and to facilitate the exchange of experiences and strengthen linkages between the countries;

4. organizing regional/sub-regional seminars/workshops and meetings to share experiences and to develop jointly new strategies for acceleration of rural development;

5. arranging inter-country/inter-project study visits for specialists in rural educational development; and

6. exchanging of experiences through attachments/internships for rural educators.

Annex I

AGENDA

I. Agenda items for phase I

1. Opening of the Study Group Meeting and presentation of documents relating to the first phase of the Meeting.

2. Consideration of provisional schedule of work and distribution of duties among the participants.

3. Review of the participating countries' experiences presented in the evaluative studies on education projects in rural areas with a view to identify major critical issues in extension of education in rural areas.

4. Analysis of causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas, focusing on causes of educational underdevelopment in rural areas, such as: pupil wastage, dropping out, class repetition and other causes specific to rural areas.

5. Consideration and completion of a background paper for the second phase of the Regional Study Group Meeting.

6. Developing a proposal for a regional plan of action for a network of experimental projects focused on linking education to the emerging needs of the population in rural areas.

II. Agenda items for phase II

1. Opening of the Meeting and presentation of documents relating to the second phase of the Meeting.

2. Consideration of provisional schedule of work and election of officers of the Meeting.

3. Presentation of a background paper elaborating the term 'network' and introducing past work done under APEID and others; and presenting broad objectives under the first and second medium-term plan of Unesco and the major issues for consideration.

4. Analysis of countries' experiences and innovative approaches in education in rural areas with focus on increasing the relevance of teaching in general, and of science and technology in particular, to rural life and environment.

5. Consideration of a framework for undertaking experimental projects focused on problems of education in rural areas and based on networks of experimental projects focused on linking education to the emerging needs of the rural population, prepared during the first phase of the Study Group Meeting.

6. Formulation of recommendations on national strategies for extension of education in rural areas; and for establishment of specialized educational institutions in rural areas, viz., teacher-training institutes, technical colleges and agricultural colleges.

7. Adoption of the Report of the Study Group Meeting.

8. Closing of the Meeting.

Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

BANGLADESH	Mr. Muhammad Ashrafuddin District Primary Education Officer 42/43 Purana Paltan Dhaka 2
CHINA (People's Republic of)	Mr. Yang Chunfa Central Institute of Educational Research No. 10, Beihuanxi Road Beijing
INDIA	Mr. O.P. Gupta Reader International Relations Unit National Council of Educational Research and Training Sri Aurobindo Marg New Delhi-110016
MALAYSIA	Associate Professor Zainal Datuk Ghani Director of Project Project INSPIRE Universiti Sains Malaysia Minden, Penang
NEPAL	Mr. Bishwa Kesher Maskay Assistant Dean Institute of Education Tribhuvan University Dean's Office, Sanothimi Bhaktapur, Kathmandu
PAKISTAN	Dr. S. Attaullah Shirazi Assistant Professor Department of Agricultural Sciences Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad
PHILIPPINES	Dr. Gloria Z. Lasam Assistant Regional Director Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports Region II, Tuguegarao, Cagayan
THAILAND	Dr. Surasugdi Labmala Educational Planning Division Department of Teacher Education Ministry of Education, Bangkok 10300

Relevance of education to rural development

(Resource person participant)

Dr. Mohamed Abdul Kadir
Director of the Adult Education Centre
Yala
Thailand

OBSERVERS

Mr. K. Emrich
Social Affairs Officer/Research
ESCAP
Bangkok, Thailand

Ms. Alexandra Stephens
Regional Officer
FAO Regional Office
Bangkok, Thailand

List of officers of the Meeting

Chairman:	Mr. Zainal Datuk Ghani
Vice-Chairmen/group convenors:	Mr. O.P. Gupta Mr. Bishwa Kesher Maskey
Rapporteur:	Dr. Gloria Lasam
Secretariat:	Mr. A. Dyankov Mr. P. Kasaju

APEID PUBLICATIONS

RELATING TO EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

1. *Exploring new directions in teacher education: re-orienting teacher education for rural development; studies. 1977**
2. *Preparing teachers for education in rural development – a handbook; report of a Study Group. 1977**
3. *Work and learning; final report of a Joint Operational Study. 1978**
4. *Administering education for rural development; report of an Advanced-level Workshop. 1979**
5. *Development of productive skills; report of a Sub-regional Workshop. 1979**
6. *Linking science education to the rural environment – some experiences; report of a Mobile Field Operational Seminar. 1980**
7. *Linking science education to real-life: curriculum design, development and implementation; report of a Sub-regional Workshop. 1980**
8. *Education and rural development planning; report of a Regional Seminar. 1981**
9. *A set of self-learning and instructional modules in science.**
10. *Education for rural development – a portfolio of studies (in five volumes). 1982**
11. *Science for all; report of a Regional Meeting. 1983*
12. *Reports of annual Asian seminars organized by Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, Japan, within the APEID framework (obtainable from Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, Inada-cho, Obihiro, Hokkaido, Japan 080):*

    1979 theme : Teacher and training

    1980 theme : Teaching of crop production

    1981 theme : Teaching of animal production

    1982 theme : Teaching of crop protection

    1983 theme : Agricultural machinery

    1984 theme : Animal protection

    1985 theme : Production, processing and marketing
13. *The role of education in integrated rural development: a bibliography. 1984*
14. *Building multidisciplinary training networks for rural development; report of a Regional Workshop. 1986*
15. *Formal and non-formal education: co-ordination and complementarity; report of a Regional Operational Seminar. 1986*

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* Out of stock

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